



**Hunter Benante**  
**Resource Teacher for the Gifted**  
**Thomas Jefferson Middle School**

# Before we start

- If I do not address your question during the presentation, please email or call me. Please include your name, your child's name (if applicable), your contact information, and the best time for me to reach you.
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- (703) 228-2249

# Objectives

- Explain the role of the Resource Teacher for the Gifted (RTG) within a Professional Learning Community (PLC).
- Provide an overview of gifted services at Thomas Jefferson Middle School.
- Provide an overview of the identification process for Gifted Services in Arlington Public Schools.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR  
**Gifted Children**

Supporting the needs of high potential learners



Arlington  
Public  
Schools



**THE NAGC recommends that every school provide:**

## THE NAGC recommends that every school provide:

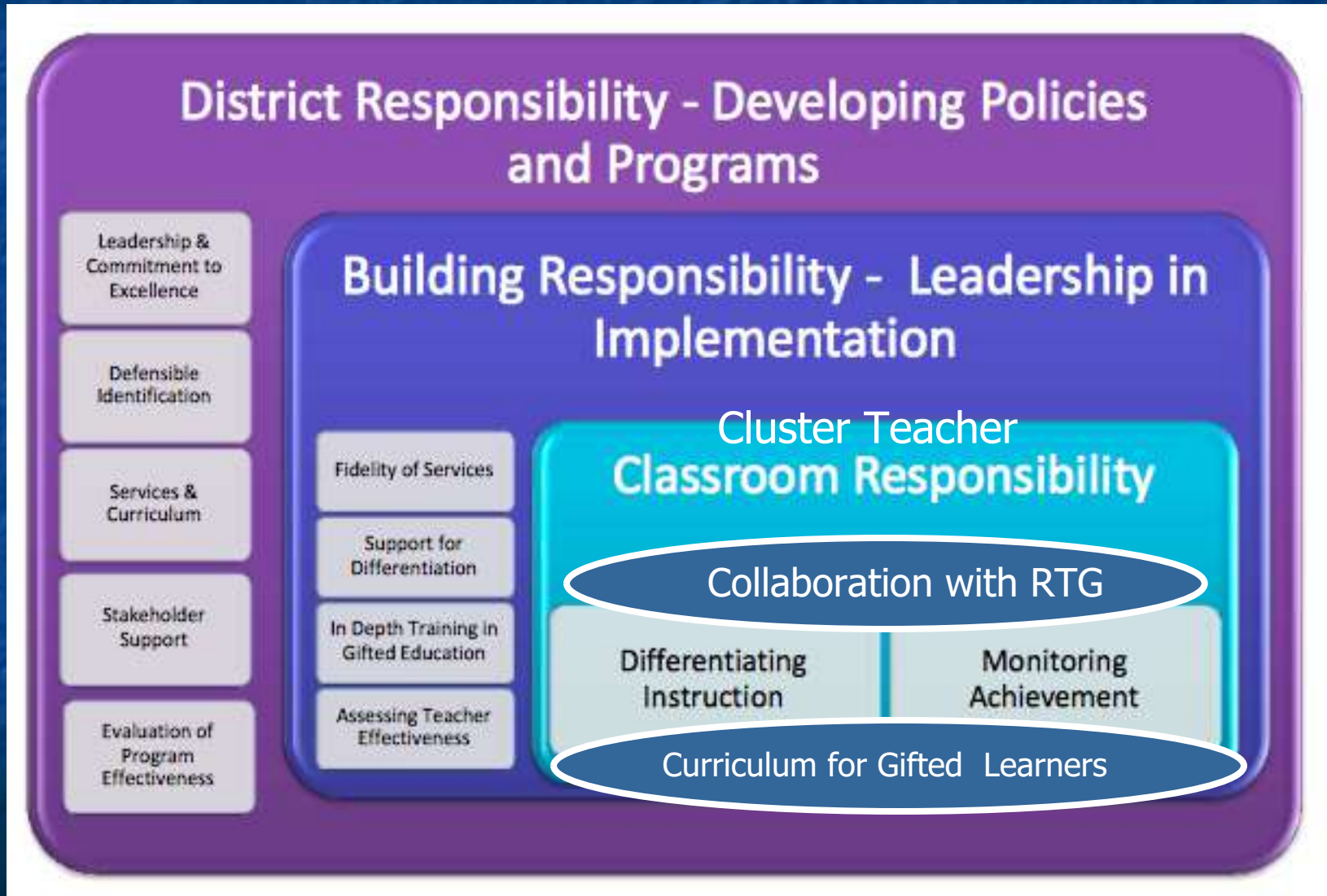
- access to curricular resources designed for gifted learners
- systematic and substantial professional development for all teachers
  - needs of gifted learners
  - differentiation in general
  - flexible grouping approaches
- resource specialists who can support the classroom teacher
  - in assessing gifted learner differences
  - making adjustments to the curriculum
  - and implementing advanced curriculum and strategies

# **Virginia Gifted Regulations – APS Local Plan 2017 - 2021**

Virginia Department of Education regulations state that each school district must develop a plan to identify and provide services to those students who have learning needs beyond the regular instructional program.

<https://www.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/2017-2022-Gifted-Services-Local-Plan.pdf>

# Shared Responsibility for Daily Differentiation for Gifted Learners



# Part 1: Professional Learning Communities





# Professional Learning Communities

## Four Key Questions Focus Us on Learning

1. What is it we expect our students to learn?
2. How will we know when they have learned it?
3. How will we provide time and support when they don't learn it?
4. **How will we extend learning when they already know it or learn it quickly?**

# My roles within a PLC

The primary role of the RTG is to increase teachers' capacity to infuse gifted pedagogy into the general education classroom.

*This capacity includes the ability to implement curriculum designed for high-ability learners*

# Role of the RTG

- Promote and model procedures, strategies, and techniques to support gifted students
- Work collaboratively with cluster teachers to plan and deliver instruction
- Provide curricular resources in order to differentiate content for gifted students

- Lead PD and/or inform staff about gifted education training opportunities
- Advocate for underrepresented populations to include 2e, ESOL/HILT, children from poverty
- Facilitate the gifted identification process
- *APS Local Plan for the Gifted 2012-2017*

# Gifted Services in 6-8 classrooms

- Collaborative Cluster Model
- Cluster Teacher is primary deliverer of differentiation with support from RTG



# Classroom Support (Grades 6-8)

- Collaborate with grade-level teams to plan and/or implement advanced content
  - Socratic seminar
- Utilize collaborative teaching methods to provide support for differentiating instruction
  - Experimental design
- Working with teachers to find and nurture underrepresented populations
  - Working with Minority Achievement Coordinator
  - Focus on 2 X10



## Arlington Public Schools

### **K-12 Critical and Creative Thinking Models & Strategies**

#### **Critical Thinking Teaching Models**

- Concept Development Model (Change, Patterns, Systems, Perspective, Cause/Effect)
- Future Problem Solving
- Jacob's Ladder
- Paul's Reasoning Model
- Problem-Based Learning
- Project-Based Learning
- Research Model
- Socratic Seminar
- William and Mary Teaching Models (Vocabulary & Literature Web, Persuasive Writing, Analyzing a Historical Situation)

#### **Creative Thinking Models**

- Creative Problem Solving (CPS)
- SCAMPER

#### **Categories of Thinking Strategies**

#### **Decisions and Outcomes**

- Habits of Mind
- PMI
- Visualization

#### **Making Connections**

- Analogies
- Encapsulation
- FFOE (Fluency, Flexibility, Originality, Elaboration)
- Mind-Mapping
- Synectics

#### **Point of View (Different Perspectives)**

- Debates
- deBono's Hats
- RAFT
- Socratic Seminar/Junior Great Books
- Structured Academic Controversy

#### **Questioning**

- Question Formulation Technique (QFT)
- Levels of Questioning
- Revised Bloom's Taxonomy



# Advanced-Content Resources

- *William and Mary Literature Units*
- *Socratic Seminar*
- *Jacob's Ladder Reading Comprehension Program*
- *Schoolwide Enrichment Model-Reading (SEM-R) Framework*
- *Best of the Continental Math League*
- *Experimental Design*
- *William and Mary Problem-Based Science Units*
- *William and Mary Social Studies Units*
- *History Alive!*
- *The DBQ Project*
- *Primary Source Documents (Library of Congress)*

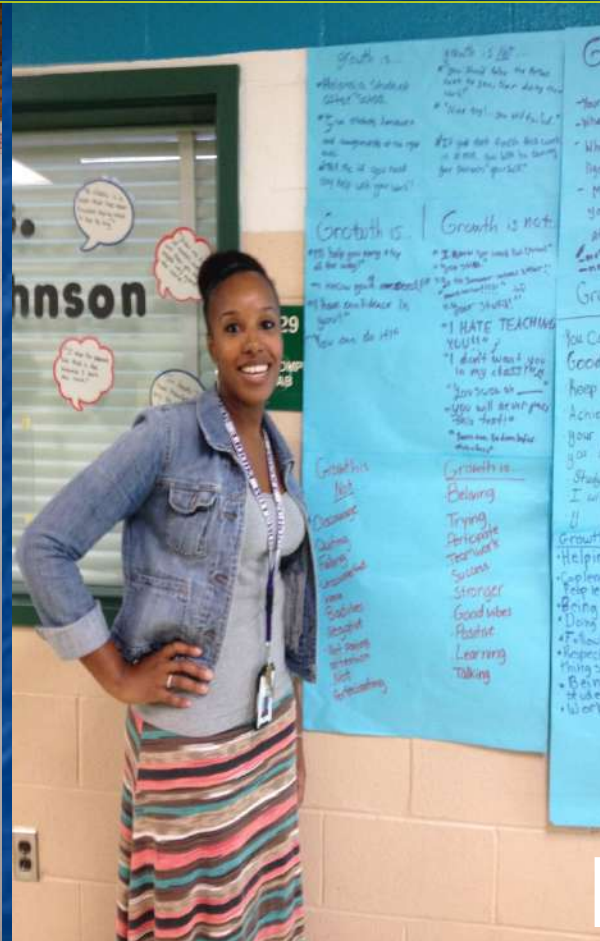
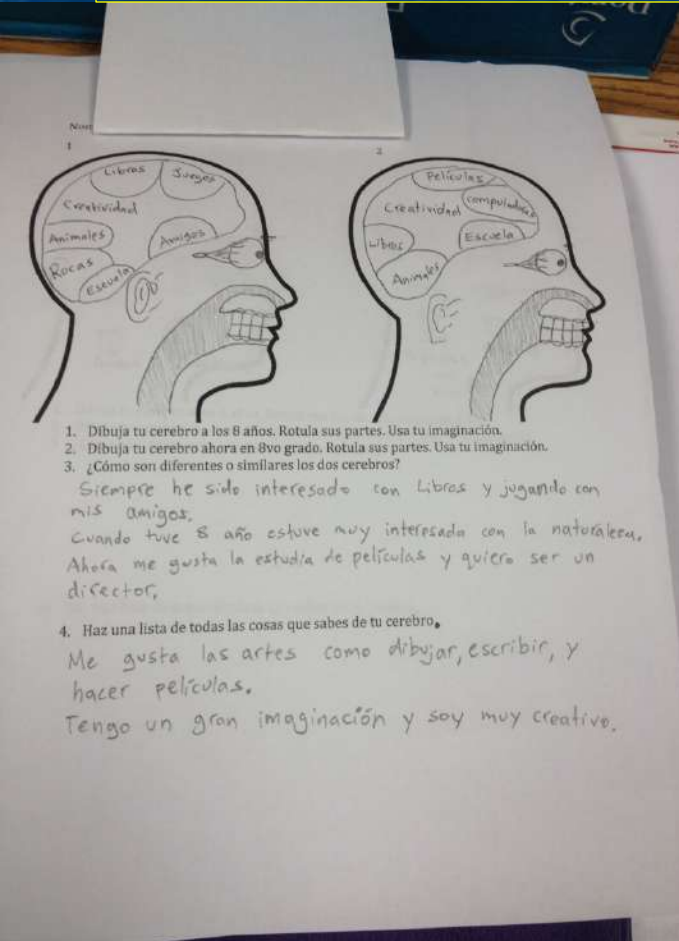
# Collaborative Teaching

- Collaborative Teaching may involve:
  - Whole group team teaching with classroom teacher
  - Small group teaching in classroom, coordinated and co-planned with classroom teacher
  - Co-planning with classroom teacher to support differentiation on days when gifted resource teacher is not in the classroom
  - Flexible grouping, which may be determined by
    - Needs of students and/or the classroom teacher
    - Difficulty of unit/topic



# Examples of What Collaboration Might Look Like ...

# Planning with Teachers: Collaborative Book Studies

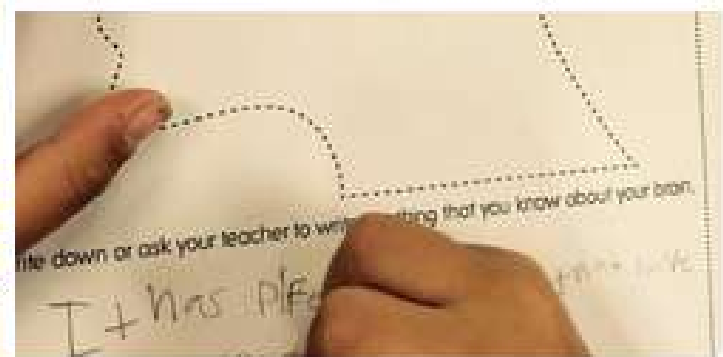
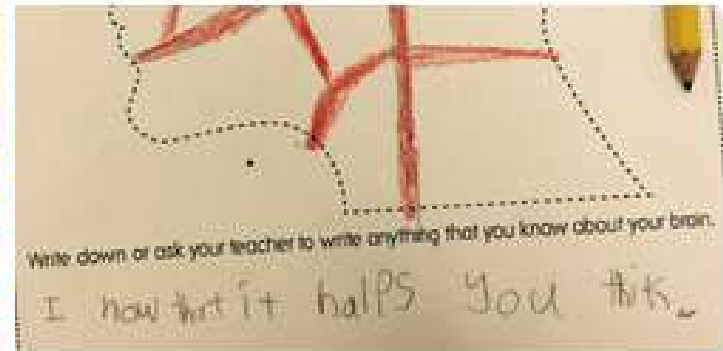


Mindset:

Increasing Capacity for Challenge:  
Resilience & Autonomous Learners

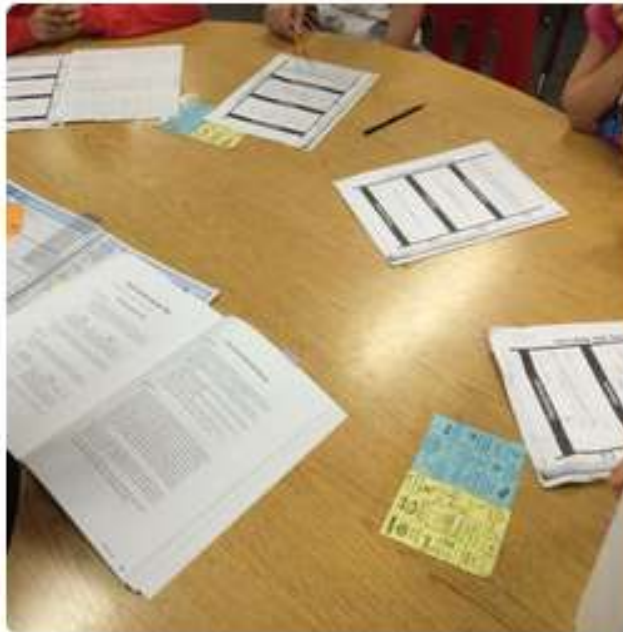
# Planning with Teachers

## Collaborative Book Studies: Mindset in the Classroom



# Modeling for teachers

## Curriculum for Advanced Learners: Jacob's Ladder & Levels of Questioning



# Supporting the Goals of Teachers

## Planning for Vocabulary Development Aligned with LA Standards



### Countenance

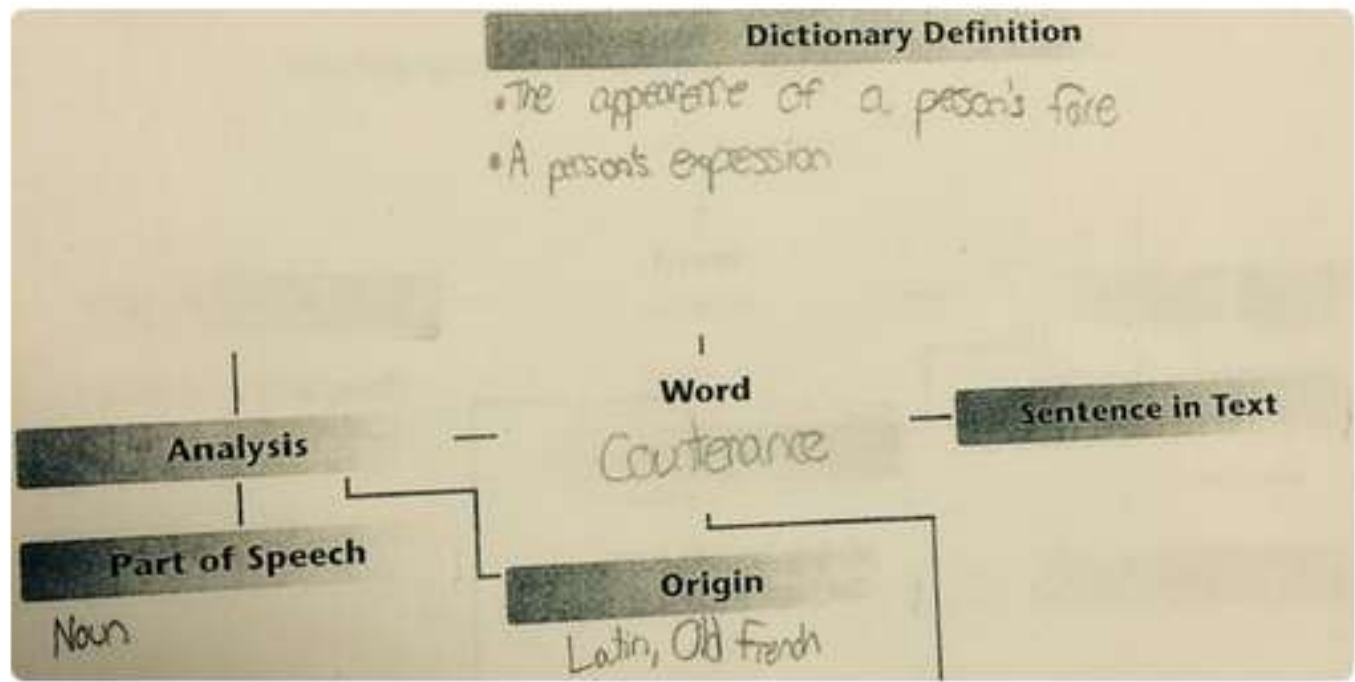
Among the most classic of the classic words, the modern English noun *countenance* comes through Middle English and Old French from the Latin verb *contuere*, to hold. The *countenance* is the face, and especially the human contents of the face. In a person's *countenance* we may see sadness, anger, love, or doubt. We see the person, not just the physiognomy or facial physiology.

The noun *countenance* has been used by Toni Morrison and Eudora Welty, by George Orwell and F. Scott Fitzgerald, by Joseph Heller and Harper Lee, and by toad-maker Kenneth Grahame. Robert Louis Stevenson used it. Harriet Beecher Stowe used it. Swift, Defoe, Milton, and Shakespeare used it. We find *countenance* in *Ethan Frome*, in *Peter Pan*, in *Lord Jim*, and in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. We find it in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* and in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. We find it in *Jane Eyre*. And in *Iambos*. And in *Walden*. *Countenance* appears in seemingly every book of note in English and American literature for four hundred years.

*Countenance* is ubiquitous, and it is ubiquitous because it is our best word for the visible self, the individuality that shows in our faces. It is a word of high humanity, and upon

# Parallel Teaching

## William & Mary Teaching Model: Vocabulary Web



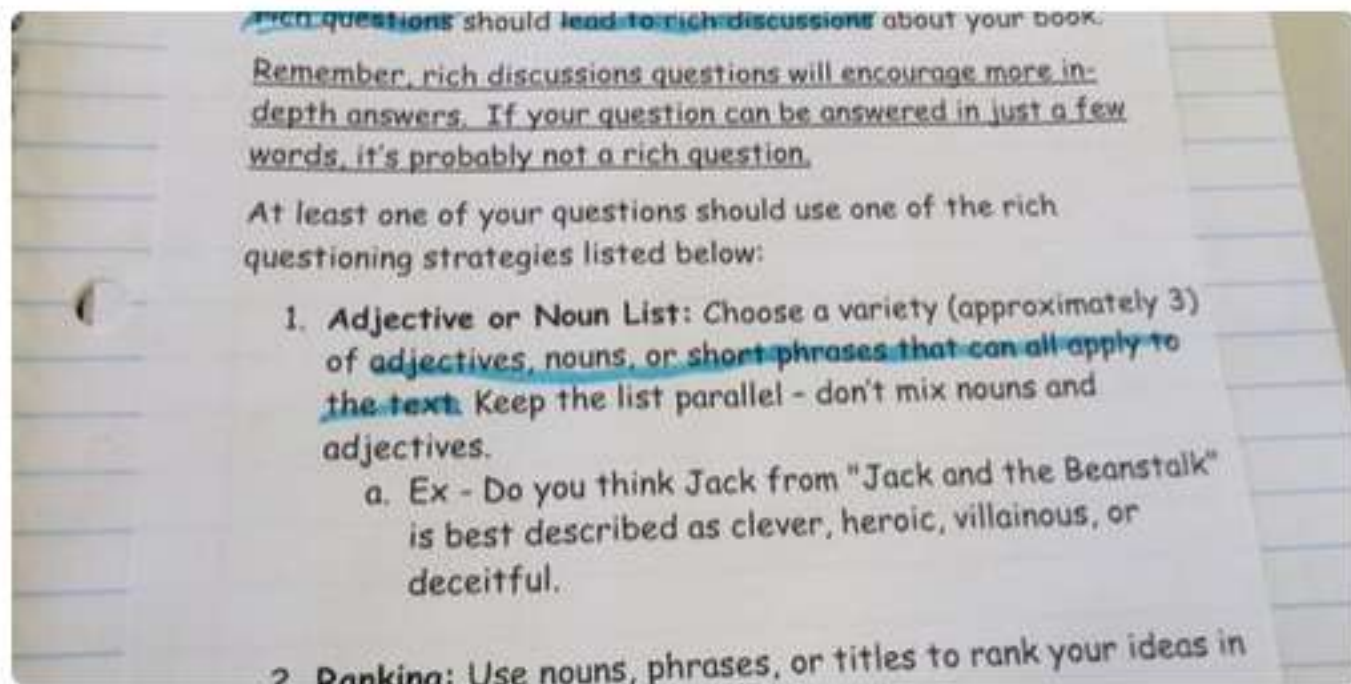
# Connecting to Content

Advanced Content DBQs: Primary Source Analysis:  
President McKinley



# Collaborative Teaching

## Advanced Content and Process: Socratic Seminar





# RTGs as Advocates for Historically Underserved Populations

- Twice Exceptional (2e)
- English Learners
- High Ability, Low Income Students
- Underachieving Students

## **Arlington Tiered System of Support (ATSS)**

ATSS is a system within collaborative learning teams (CLT) for meeting the needs of all students

Uses data to identify students who are in need of remediation or **extensions**

**PLC question #4: *How will we extend learning when they already know it or learn it quickly?***

# About ATSS

helps each student reach success in academics, behavior and social emotional well-being through a systemwide framework that provides additional resources and supports.

There are three tiers of instruction and support: Tier 1 (Core), Tier 2, and Tier 3.



## Questions that guide each team:

1

What do we expect the student to know or be able to do?

2

How do we know the student has learned it?

3

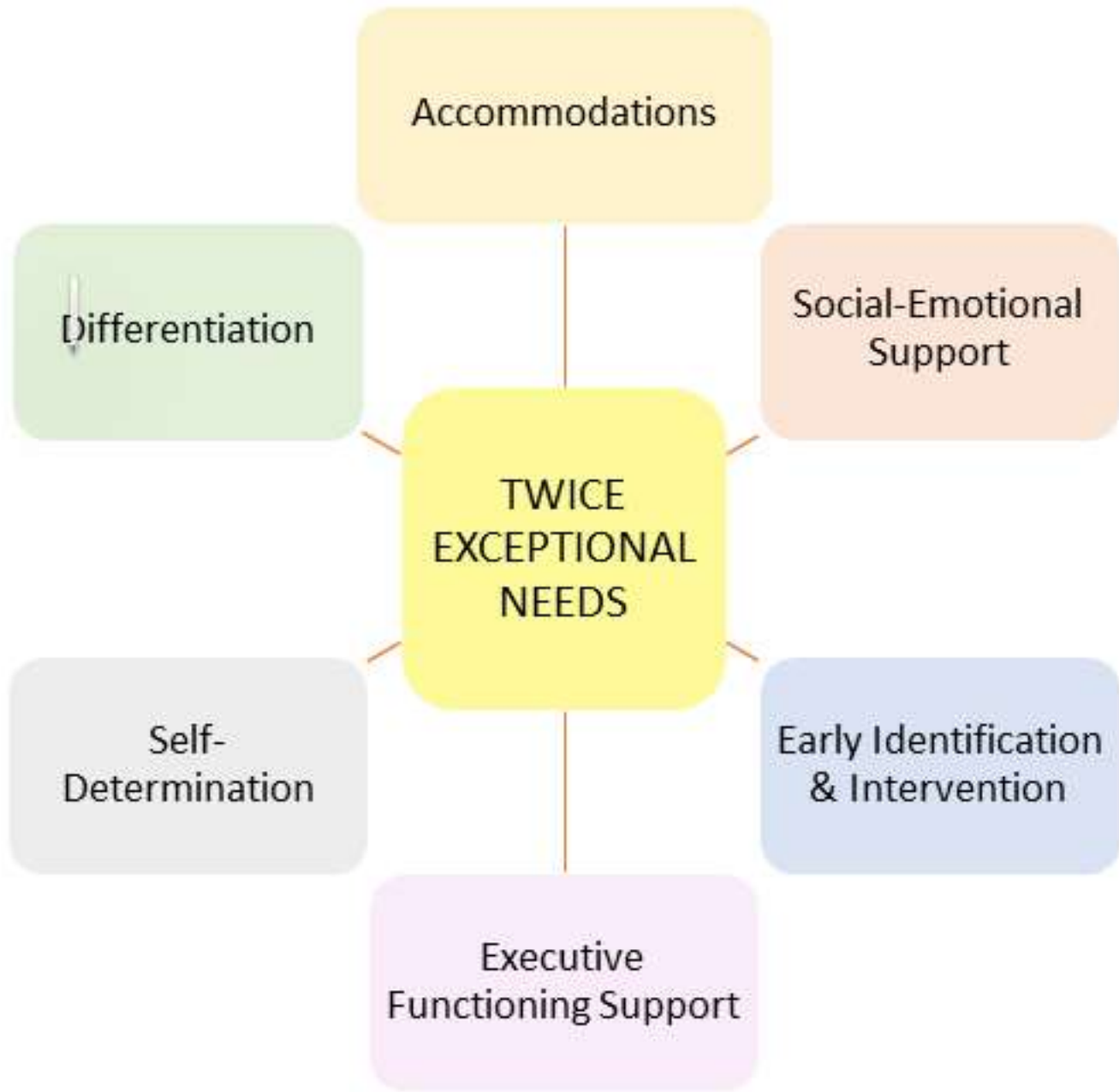
What do we do if the student has not learned it?

4

What do we do if the student knows it?

# 2e Wrap Around Support





# 2e at Our School

- Examples of successful collaboration with teachers
- Success story supporting a 2e learner
- Structure of how teachers support students together at \_\_\_\_\_

# ESOL/HILT Support

- Similar to 2e with wrap around support
- RTG works collaboratively with general education teacher and ESOL/HILT teacher to find and nurture students
  - Building Background Knowledge
  - Access to Grade Level Content
  - Opportunities for Critical & Creative Thinking

# ESOL/HILT at Our School

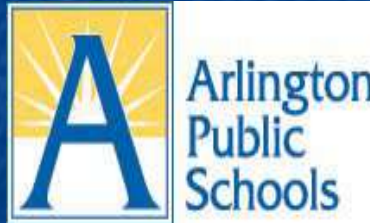
- Examples of successful collaboration with teachers
- Specific examples of how gifted services supported a HILT learner
- Structure of how teachers support students together at



# Ongoing Communication

- Parent information night and identification power point on website
- Collaborative effort between cluster teachers and RTGs
  - Ongoing communication in the form of CLT meetings, individual meetings, email, special project meetings
  - Each quarter grade level CLTs share information with the RTG about differentiated, expanded, and enriched curriculum in their subject area. The RTG compiles it into a chart to send to parents through school email.
- Conference Days Can join cluster teacher for meetings
- Other Meetings based on requests

# Getting Connected: APS Gifted Services



APS Gifted Services Website [www.apsva.us/giftedservices](http://www.apsva.us/giftedservices)

Sign up for

@APSGifted



Add your Twitter @ Hbenante



@WilliamsburgAdmin

# Contact Information

\_\_\_\_\_, Resource Teacher for the Gifted

Email:

Phone:

Cheryl McCullough, Supervisor, Gifted Services

Email: [cheryl.mccullough@apsva.us](mailto:cheryl.mccullough@apsva.us)

Phone: 703-228-6159



# Gifted Services Advisory Committee (GSAC)

Arlington Public School's Parent Advocacy Group

- Part of Advisory Council of Instruction

<https://www.apsva.us/aci/gifted-services/>

- Monthly meetings (1st Wednesday: 6:30 – 8:00 PM followed by ACI meeting 8:00 - 9:00 PM)

If interested in serving on this committee, please contact Dan Corcoran, [danjcorcoraniii@gmail.com](mailto:danjcorcoraniii@gmail.com)



# Parent Resources

- Virginia Association for the Gifted (VAG)  
<http://www.vagifted.org>
- National Association for the Gifted (NAGC)  
<http://nagc.org>
- Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG)  
<http://sengifted.org>

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Questions

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# Part 3: The Gifted Identification Process



# Gifted Services: Areas of Identification

- Specific Academic Aptitude (Grades K-12)
  - English
  - Mathematics
  - Science
  - Social Studies
- Visual or Performing Arts (Grades 3-12)
  - Visual Art
  - Vocal Music
  - Instrumental Music (instruments taught in APS)



# Screening for Gifted Services

- Each year, the total population is screened by school staff to create a pool of candidates based on students' need for gifted services.
- Students may be referred for services by their classroom teacher, school personnel, parents/guardians, community leaders, or other students **until April 1<sup>st</sup>** of the current school year
- Once a student is referred for services, the RTG works to create a portfolio with *four main components for a holistic case study approach*.

# 1. Nationally-normed assessments

- Grade 2 students, and new-to-APS 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, take the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT-2)
- Grade 4 students, and new-to-APS 5<sup>th</sup> graders, take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)
- Other tests may be included such as the WISC, Kaufman-Brief Intelligence Test (KBIT)

## 2. School-based Achievement

- County Level:  
SOLs, Interactive Achievement Tests and SRI
- School Level:  
Ongoing formative and summative assessments
- Individual Level:  
Honors or distinctions (ex. VJAS, History Day, Continental Math League, Reflections Contest, etc).

# 3. Student Behaviors/Characteristics

- Local screening committee completes a Gifted Behavior Commentary (GBC)
  - Documents gifted characteristics and behaviors observed in a variety of settings across four categories
- Parent Information Sheet
  - Documents gifted characteristics and behaviors observed in a variety of settings across four categories
  - Provides an opportunity for parents to share examples that the school team may not have had an opportunity to observe during the school day

## Gifted Behaviors Commentary (GBC)

### Exceptional ability to learn

- Is highly reflective and/or sensitive to his/her environment
- Readily learns and adapts to new cultures
- Is acquiring language at a rapid pace

### Exceptional application of knowledge

- Uses and interprets advanced symbol systems in academics, visual arts, and/or performing arts
- Acts as an interpreter and/or facilitator to help others
- Communicates learned concepts through role playing and/or detailed artwork

### Exceptional creative / productive thinking

- Expresses ideas, feelings, experiences, and/or beliefs in original ways
- Perceives and manipulates patterns, colors, and/or symbols

### Exceptional motivation to succeed

- Meets exceptional personal and/or academic challenges
- Exhibits a strong sense of loyalty and responsibility
- Demonstrates exceptional ability to adapt to new experiences

# 4. Demonstrated Performance

- Distinguished levels of performances when working with advanced content.
- Examples may include:
  - *Interpretive responses within William and Mary Language Arts units*
  - *Analysis of Primary Source Documents – DBQs*
  - *Responses to Experimental Design lessons*
  - *Responses to Critical and Creative Thinking lessons*

# Visual and Performing Arts (VPA)

- Referrals for Visual/Performing Arts begin in Grade 3
  - Gifted Behavior Commentary (Art and Music Teacher Observations of Artistic Behaviors)
  - Student Products provided by art/music teachers
  - Parent Information Form

# Art Differentiation

## ■ Visual Arts:

- Differentiation takes place in the art classes
  - analyzing their work with more in-depth questions
  - working with more/different materials
- Open-ended projects that allow for students to demonstrate their creativity and abilities



# Music Differentiation

## ■ Music:

- Differentiation takes place in the music classes
- Open-ended projects that allow for students to demonstrate their creativity and abilities
- Additional Opportunities <https://www.apsva.us/arts-education-overview/honors-band-orchestra-and-chorus/>
  - Junior Honors Orchestra (grades 4 – 6) & Honors Orchestra (grades 7-8)
  - Elementary Honors Chorus (Grade 5) & Honors Chorus (grades 6-8)
  - Junior Honors Band (grades 4 – 6) & Honors Band (grades 7-8)
  
- Honors Band
- Honors Orchestra

# Identification Decisions

- At the end of the referral process (90 instructional days), a local screening committee meets to review the student's portfolio and make determines about eligibility.
- Identification decisions are sent to parents or guardians by letter within 10 school days of the Identification Committee meeting.

**Gifted Services Identification Process Outlined on APS Gifted Services web page**

# If students are found eligible

- Identified gifted students in grades 2-5 are **cluster grouped\*** into classrooms with intellectual peers
- RTG plans with and supports the classroom teachers *\*typically or the upcoming school year* using extension activities and projects for students who have already mastered grade-level content
  - Note: Support may look different in the various grade levels depending on teacher and student needs

# If students are not found eligible

- An appeal is available to families following the eligibility process
  - Appeals begin at the school level with the principal
  - A second level of appeal is countywide Gifted Services Administrative Appeals Committee

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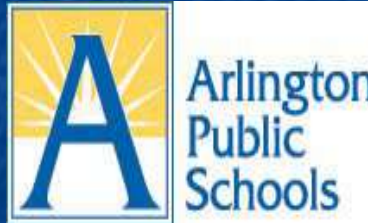
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Sign up for



@APSGifted

@Hbenante

# Contact Information

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